(c) whether it is proposed to take a decision in this behalf before March, 1977, in order to encourage and achieve the progress of these Castes ?

SRI D. DEVARAJ URS (Chief Minister).—

(a) The matter is being examined.

(b) No.

(c) A decision will be taken as early as possible.

Smuggling of forest timber

259. SRI M. S. KRISHNAN (Malleswaram).—Will the Minister for Food and Forests be pleased to state :—

(a) whether the Government is aware that forests in the State are being denuded by Contractors who fell trees indiscriminately and smuggle them outside the State ;

(b) if so, the action taken against such smugglers ;

(c) whether any such smugglers have been arrested and detained ; if so, the names of the smugglers and when they were arrested ;

(d) whether some of the smugglers of forest timber, who were detained have been released ; if so, the reasons for the same ?

SRI K. H. PATIL (Minister for Food and Forests).—

(a) No.

(b) Does not arise in view of the reply to question (a) above.

(c) It is not advisable to reveal the names of the Timber Merchants in the public interest, even if they were arrested.

(d) Reply given to question (c) above stands.

Misappropriation cases in Forest Department, Mysore District

263. SRI K. SIDDAIAH (Santhemarahalli).—Will the Minister for Food and Forests be pleased to state —

(a) the number of cases of misappropriation pending before Government in Forest Department in Mysore District and the total amount involved during the last 3 years;

(b) out of them, the number of cases pending for more than 1 year and more than 3 years (to be given separately);

(c) the number of officers or officials kept under suspension pending enquiry for more than one year;